



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS  
Washington, D.C. 20231  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

09/660,381

09/12/2000

Ernst F. Schroder

RCA 90,316

6814

7590

12/18/2002

Joseph S Tripoli  
Patent Operations  
Thomson Multimedia Licensing Inc  
CN 5312  
Princeton, NJ 08543-0028

EXAMINER

BROWN, VERNAL U

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2635

DATE MAILED: 12/18/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/660,381

Applicant(s)

SCHRODER, ERNST F.

Examiner

Vernal U Brown

Art Unit

2635

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 September 2000.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 12 September 2000 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120**

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 4,5. 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### **DETAILED ACTION**

The application of Ernest F. Schroder for Voice Control System With A Microphone Array filed 9/12/2000 has been examined. Claims 1-4 are pending.

#### ***Drawings***

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the speech recognition must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Launey et al. U.S. Patent 5086385.

Regarding claim 1, Launey et al. teaches a voice control system (col. 3 lines 30-31). Launey et al. teaches a plurality of microphones connected to a speech recognition unit for

Art Unit: 2635

converting voice command into operational command (col. 10 lines 3-16). Launey et al. also teaches remote microphones connected in such a way so that signal generated by the microphones are transmitted to the central speech recognition unit (col.15 lines 39-41). Launey et al. further teaches multiple voice recognition location which incorporates a microphone (col. 15 lines 37-39) and the speech recognition locations are used to control appliances (col. 2 lines 43-54), therefore the microphones are distributed between the different appliances.

Regarding claim 2, Launey et al. teaches the appliances are connected via AT bus (col. 14 lines 48-49). The AT bus forms a bi-directional network.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Launey et al. U.S. Patent 5086385 in view of Lea U.S. Patent 6349352.

Regarding claim 3, Launey et al. teaches the appliances are connected via a AT bus network (col. 14 lines 48-49) but is silent on teaching the bi-directional network is based on the IEEE 1394 bus. Lea in an art related Home Audio/Video Network With Both Generic And

Parameterized Device Control teaches the use of the IEEE 1394 bus to connect home appliance (col. 7 lines 48-49).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art for the bi-directional network to be based on the IEEE 1394 bus in Launey et al. as evidenced by Lea because Launey et al. suggests the use of a standard type network bus and Lea teaches the use of the IEEE 1394 bus as a standard bus to connect home appliances.

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Launey et al. U.S. Patent 5086385 in view of Stein U.S. Patent 5963872.

Regarding claim 4, Launey et al. is silent on teaching one or more microphones integrated in a consumer electronics reproduction appliance and one or more microphones are integrated in external loudspeakers. Stein in an art related Electronic Equipment Audio System invention teaches the coupling of the microphone and speaker to an appliance (col. 3 lines 7-9).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have one or more integrated in a consumer electronics reproduction appliance and one or more microphones are integrated in external loudspeakers in Launey et al. as evidenced by Stein because Launey et al. suggests a microphone coupled to the appliances and Stein teaches the coupling of the microphone and speaker to an appliance for the inputting of voice command for controlling the appliance.

### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Vernal U Brown whose telephone number is 703-305-3864. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 8:30 AM-5:30 PM.

Art Unit: 2635

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Horabik can be reached on 703-305-4704. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-308-6743 for regular communications and 703-308-6743 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-3900.



Vernal Brown

December 11, 2002

MICHAEL HORABIK  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2600

